

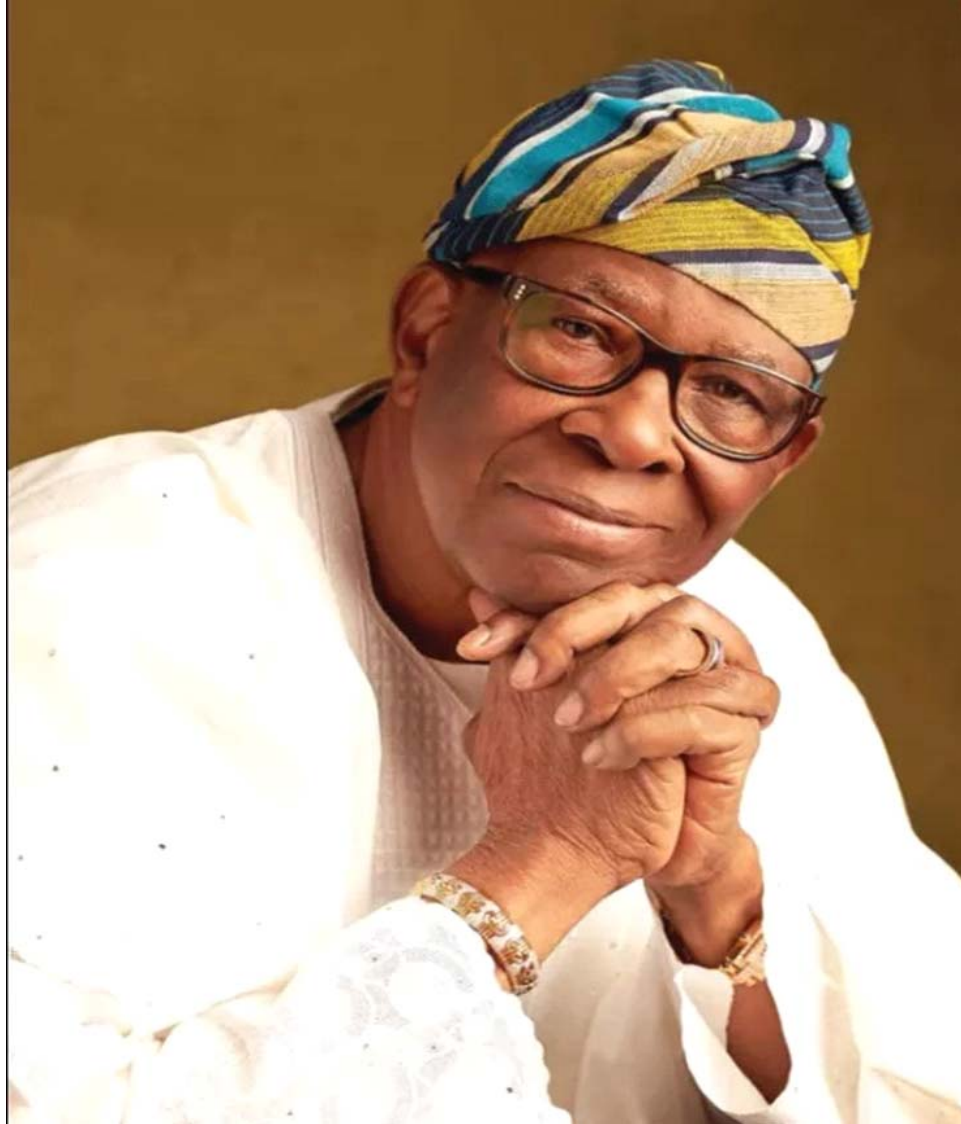


# ELIZADE UNIVERSITY @10

**Navigating a Complex Path in the  
Making of a World-Class University**

Edited by  
**JOSEPH ADEMOLA FABAYO  
TAIWO OLADEJI ADEFISOYE**

**Elizade University @10**



**Chief Michael Ade.Ojo, OON**  
*Founder/Proprietor, Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin*

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The milestones reached by Elizade University in the first decade of its establishment is as a result of God's benevolence and mercy. Besides, the inspiration for this book stemmed from Him. Therefore, all glory and honour be unto His Majesty! The Founder and Proprietor of Elizade University, Chief Michael Ade.Ojo, OON is worthy of special recognition and appreciation for his vision of a world-class university, and for committing his life savings to pursue the vision.

The Governing Council of Elizade University, led by the distinguished Professor 'Femi Bamiro, FAS, FAEng deserves special appreciation. It is worthy to specially recognize and appreciate the contributions of the Vice-Chancellor of the Institution, Professor Olukayode Amund, FAS towards the success of this book project. Not left out are the Registrar, Mr. Omololu Adegbenro, the Bursar, Mr. Olusegun Ajeigbe and the University Librarian, Dr. Christopher Nkiko, who doubles as the Chairman of the Editorial Team of this book. We appreciate your immense support!

This book would not have been possible without the chapter contributors, who in spite of their tight schedules, devoted time to make this book a success. Likewise, members of the Editorial Team: Dr. Babatunde Akanji, Dr. Wole Adamolekun, Dr. Fred Braimah, Dr. Eric Olabisi, Dr. Wale Adedeji, Dr. Sunday Ayodabo and Dr. Abisola Aiyeola are specially appreciated for investing quality time and energy into the editorial processes that have birthed this book. It is also important to recognize the following people: Dr. Omolola Olarinde, Dr. Babatunde Ololade, Dr. Joshua Fajimbola, Dr (Engr.) Temikotan and Dr. Sunday Ogbeide for sparing the time to review some of the submissions.

Finally, we appreciate all those who provided support during the compilation, binding and printing of this book.

May God continually honour all of us in our respective endeavours.

Professor Joseph Ademola Fabayo

Dr. Taiwo Oladeji Adefisoye

## Foreword

In the 21st century, knowledge-based economies will create the wealth, prosperity and well-being of nations. Research and tertiary education systems are primary drivers of these, playing three key roles of knowledge production through research, knowledge dissemination or teaching towards skills development, and knowledge transfer in form of research-driven innovation – products and processes – entering the national and global socio-economic spaces. Examination of the Nigerian University System over the years shows clearly that the system has been facing critical challenges, which can be comprehensively interrogated on the platform of five vectors, comprising: *access, quality, cost, relevance, and governance*. Of interest is the problem of access, which for several years was a problem of demand-supply gap with many qualified candidates unable to gain admissions to the existing public universities. The initial concern with increasing access was therefore the major driver of government policies leading to the liberalization of the establishment of several universities in the public and private sectors, with the establishment of State universities starting from 1976 and Private universities two decades later, in 1996. Thus, university education in Nigeria has come a long way since the establishment of the University College, Ibadan in 1948.

As at 2012, when Elizade University (EU) was established, the country could only boast of 127 universities made up of 39 Federal, 38 State and 50 Private, with total students' enrolments of 1,131,312. Today, the country can boast a total of two-hundred and seventeen (217) Universities, consisting of forty-nine (49) Federal Universities, 57 State-owned Universities and one-hundred and eleven (111) Private Universities, with more of the latter in the pipeline for approval by the National Universities Commission (NUC). This figure remains the highest on the African continent.

No doubt, the emergence of private universities in Nigeria is one undeniable trajectory in the history of tertiary education in the country, as it has increased access to university education in the past two decades. However, it is pertinent to note the dynamics of the sector in which the access problem has changed from its initial conception as a *demand-supply* gap to, of recent, a *supply-demand* gap, with most universities, public and private, unable to fill their established quota from the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) admissions process. This has led a few to question the rationale for the establishment of additional universities in the country. Equally important, however, is the problem of graduate employability, accentuated by the products of the system not having the relevant skills to thrive in the local and global economies. Surely, how individual universities address all these challenges are of utmost interest. Hence, the commendation of Elizade University in the publication of this book that seeks to document its immense contributions to expanding access to high quality university education and training in the country with some of their graduates already impacting the socio-economic and educational sectors of the country.

Licensed in 2012 as the 45th Private University by the National Universities Commission, Abuja, Elizade University has come a long way in providing sound university education and training, driven by a dynamic workforce, modern technology and innovations. It is gratifying to note, that in just one decade, the University has emerged as a force to be reckoned with in Nigeria's tertiary educational system, despite the complexities around the country's policy environment. Therefore, it is worthy to document the strides and success stories of the University in the first decade of its existence. Hence, this book, titled *Elizade University @10: Navigating a Complex Path in the Making of a World-Class University*, is a worthy initiative, as it presents the strides of Elizade University in the past ten years of interest to all those concerned with tertiary education in the country and beyond. The commitment to transforming the institution to world-class was not by chance, but through the pioneering vision of a world-class university by the Founder, Chief Michael Ade.Ojo. That the Founder appreciated the requirements of a world-class university is accentuated by his unwavering commitment as brilliantly presented in the opening part of the book. As noted by Jamil Salmi, the superior results of world-class institutions (highly sought graduates, leading-edge research, and technology transfer) can essentially be attributed to the following three complementary sets of factors at play in top universities: one, *High concentration of talent* (faculty and students); two, *Abundant resources* to offer a rich learning environment and to conduct advanced research; and three, *Favourable governance* features that encourage strategic vision, innovation, and flexibility and that enable institutions to make decisions and to manage resources without being encumbered by bureaucracy.

The book, which is highly recommended, depicts, to varying degrees, how the above factors have been addressed in the past ten years at Elizade University. Furthermore, lectures and speeches presented during the University's past convocation ceremonies by eminent stakeholders in Nigeria's educational sector, were documented. No doubt, this book is a worthy contribution to knowledge on university education and training in Nigeria. It is a landmark in the journey of Elizade University as it navigates the complex path in the making of a world-class university.

**Emeritus Professor 'Femi Bamiro**, FAS, FAEng  
*Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council,*  
*Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State and*  
*Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Ibadan (2005-2010)*

# Goodwill Messages

## **To Elizade University @10**

It was Otto von Bismarck, founder and first chancellor of the German Empire, who reportedly remarked, “the nation that has the schools has the future”. By extension, then, the communities that host the schools host the future. This is why, in one decade, not only has Elizade University put Ilara-Mokin on the map, this University has indeed become the pride of Ondo State, a beacon of hope to the South-West, and a testament to the visionary outlook of the Founder, the sagaciousness of the Board, the dedication of the teaching and non-teaching staff, the commitment to learning by the students, and the progressive and hospitable spirit of the host community.

## **Pastor Tunde Bakare**

*The Serving Overseer*

*Citadel Global Community Church, and a one-time Vice-Presidential Candidate in Nigeria*

## **Ten Years of Elizade University Elixir**

It is heartening to see what is on ground as **ELIZADE UNIVERSITY** celebrates its ten years of existence. The environment is idyllic and the determination of stakeholders to accomplish the mission and vision of the institution is palpable.

Hearty congratulations to the Founder, the Governing Council of the University, the Senate, Staff and Students. We need no more evidence of Elizade University’s future greatness than the inspiring scope and depth of knowledge being transmitted, the close relations between Faculty members, students and the administrators and, of course, the efforts at linking teaching and research to public needs and national development. May humanistic thoughts and vision continue to invigorate Elizade University in the decades ahead.

## **Professor (Ambassador) Tunde Adeniran, KJW, OPF, FCPA**

*Former Minister of Education*

*Federal Republic of Nigeria*

*and Ambassador Extraordinaire and Plenipotentiary to the Federal Republic of Germany*

One would like to congratulate the Founder/Proprietor, Council/Board of Trustees, Senate, Management, Staff, Students, Alumni and Friends of Elizade University, Ilara Mokin, Ondo State of Nigeria for weathering the storms this past decade while looking for greater achievements in the years ahead. Your effort in building a world-

class university is highly commendable.

**Professor Abel Idowu Olayinka**

*Ph.D., DIC, FGS, FAS, FNMGS, FNAPE, FNAH, FNAEGE  
Vice-Chancellor, University of Ibadan, Ibadan (2015-2020)*

We bring greetings from the Global Board and Management of the Diaspora Innovative Institute, USA to commemorate the 10th year anniversary of Elizade University... Congratulations and happy anniversary!

**Professor Byron Price**

*Global Director, Diaspora Innovative Institute, USA*

On behalf of the entire Parents/Guardians of Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin under the umbrella of PARENTS' FORUM, I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to the Founder, Chief Michael Ade.Ojo, the Board of Trustees, Management, Principal Officers, all the Deans, Heads of Departments staff and students of this great University on this auspicious 10th anniversary celebration. Over these years, Elizade University has done commendable work for her innovative approaches in education, the conducive environment for learning and dedicated management and staff in ensuring that our children/wards are brought up in learning and character . . . supporting, motivating and encouraging them to strive for excellence . . . We appreciate you for these good works and pray for more strength and wisdom to do more. It's been 10 awesome years of great achievements and history-making. Congratulations once again. The future is bright for Elizade University and wishing her a lot of success and prosperity for many years ahead! ELIZADE UNIVERSITY . . . GOING HIGHER.

**Engr. (Mrs) Oluwaseun Borokinni**

*Chairperson, Parents' Forum, Elizade University*

It is my pleasure to celebrate Elizade University on its 10th anniversary. Being an alumnus and an academic staff, I am only grateful to the University. The University is a diamond, glowing in the academic world. I want to appreciate the Founder of the University, Chief Michael Ade.Ojo for his relentless support and zeal towards achieving a world-class university. I am confident that the University would play a significant role in producing world-class graduates in the advancement of the frontiers of knowledge in engineering, sciences, law, humanities and social sciences. Thank you to the alumni, students, faculty members and non-teaching staff, both past and present for your dedication to make Elizade University a leader in tertiary education.

**Akintunde Fasuba**

*Department of Civil Engineering and the  
Best Graduating Student, 2018/2019 Set (CGPA 4.95)*

## Abbreviations

A*STAR	Agency for Science, Technology and Research
ABU	Ahmadu Bello University
ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
ALC	Africa Laser Center
ANAN	Association of National Accountants of Nigeria
APCON	Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria
ARWU	Academic Ranking of World Universities
ASUU	Academic Staff Union of Universities
BCF	Blue Charter Fellowship
CAMA	Companies and Allied Matters Acts
CCNY	Carnegie Corporation of New York
CIBN	Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria
CIIS	Chartered Institute of Insurance of Nigeria
CIPM	Chartered Institute of Personnel Management
CIS	Chartered Institute of Stock Brokers
CISI	Chartered Institute for Securities and Investments
CITN	Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria
CITYU	City University of Hong Kong
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease – 2019.
CPE	Community Protective Equipment (CPE)
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
EU	Elizade University
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HAEMS	Home Appliance Energy Management System
ICAN	Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria
ICCCAD	International Center for Climate Change and Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTC	Information and Communication Technology Centre
IGR	Internally Generated Revenue
IIE	Institute of International Education
ITF	Industrial Training Fund
KCL	King’s College London
KII	Key Informant Interview
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
NCC	Nigerian Communications Commission
NERC	North American Electric Reliability Council
NIM	Nigerian Institute of Management
NIMN	National Institute of Marketing of Nigeria

NPE	National Policy on Education
NPUGA	Nigeria Private University Games Association
NPUGA	Nigeria Private University Games Association
NREL	National Renewable Energy Laboratory
NUC	Nigeria Universities Commission
NUGA	Nigerian University Games Association
OAU	Obafemi Awolowo University
OSHIGA	Ondo State Higher Institution Games Association
PFA	Performing and Film Arts
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
PPWS	Physical Planning, Works and Services
QCA	Quality Control and Assurance
RTF-DCS	Research Training Fellowship for Developing Countries' Scientists
SCF	Student Consultative Forum
SHGR	Smokin Hills Golf Resort
SIWES	Students Industrial Works Experience Scheme
SLA	Service Level Agreements
SMEs	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
TETFUND	Tertiary Education Trust Fund
UCI	University College Ibadan
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USIU	United States International University – Africa
VC	Vice-Chancellor
VCSI	Vice-Chancellorship Stability Index
VOR	Voice of Reason Foundation
WCU	World-Class University
WHO	World Health Organization
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council

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## The Historical Antecedents of Ilara-Mokin and the Transformational Impact of Elizade University

Omololu Adegbenro, Abiodun Olofinsao and Frederick Braimah

### Introduction

THE transformation of Ilara-Mokin in Ifedore's local government area of Ondo State, Nigeria, in the immediate past decade is phenomenal and monumental. This transformation is largely brought about by the establishment of Elizade University by Chief Michael Ade.Ojo. The transformation of Ilara-Mokin from an agrarian rural community ten years ago to an urban town includes the physical, economic and social factors.

Ilara-Mokin is a semi-urban community in the southwest geopolitical area of Nigeria, about 5 km west of Akure, in Ifedore local government area. Its coordinates are latitude 7.349701 and longitude 5.1067314 and the population is estimated at 45,000. Ilara-Mokin has a community health centre, a police station before the resumption of activities at the Elizade University. Ilara-Mokin in 2013 was predominantly an agrarian community. The agrarian activities are facilitated by three major rivers crossing the community, namely, the Omifunfun, River Akponmi, and River Isokun (Williams, Amusan, and Oke, 2019).

Community colleges and institutions are most often the lifeblood and economic hub of rural communities. They are drivers of economic activities while also paving assesses to higher education. According to the Rural Community College Alliance of America report (2021) presented by the Science Foundation of Arizona, about two-thirds of all public two-year colleges serve rural communities in the United States. Their roles transcend wedging poverty to providing pathways to larger urban communities and expanded job opportunities.

Hudson (2013) espouses the Anchor institution model approach to community development as those higher institutions operating in their locations seek economic development ends. These institutions, according to Hudson (2013) contribute to community development by designing and giving substance and solidarity to the

kind of inclusive community and democratic culture that benefits the diverse society. In a qualitative study of twenty-one neighbourhoods by the Promise Neighbourhood Initiative, Hudson (2015) reports that the study discovered higher education institutions commit to capacity-building practices, direct community services, and community engagement from the perspective of community goals.

In an empirical study of the impact of Ebonyi State University (EBSU) on its host community, Sarah et al (2019) found out that the academic programs of EBSU have assisted in the educational development of the local communities taking into account the enrolment figures of the inhabitants. The study also found out that the site of the university in the Abakaliki environs has accentuated the economic activities of the communities and also assists in their physical and structural development. This is evidenced by the massive infrastructural development that is visible in the host communities. The study further found out that the presence of EBSU has led to an increase in religious, social, and cultural activities with an attendant moral development in the host communities.

This study sets out to document the impacts of Elizade University on the socio-economic development of Ilara-Mokin and to particularly document any impact upon the lives and livelihoods of Ilara-Mokin indigenes. The following research questions to guide the study were raised.

- (1) Has the establishment of Elizade University impacted the socio-economic transformation of Ilara-Mokin?
- (2) Has the presence of Elizade University affected the lives of the residents of Ilara-Mokin?

### **Conceptualising Transformation and Community Development**

Transformation is a process of change from one particular state to another. According to Gass (2012), “transformation can be likened to metamorphosis. It is the fundamental change that can alter the very nature of a particular thing.” Gass (2012) further posits that transformation is a systemic change, a deliberate attempt to address all the relevant factors that contribute to the essence of the human society, an organisation of the society. He asserts that profound change should predicate on three domains of the human being and their system. These domains are the mind, the behavior, and the structure. In Gass’s (2012) view, the mind is shaped by feelings, beliefs, thoughts, philosophies, and ideas that shape the worldview of the individuals. The behavior, he explains, is determined by the mental processes that shape actions and outcomes while structures encompass things found in the external environment.

Delineating ‘community’ and ‘development’ will provide a pathway or roadmap to understanding the concept of community development. The term community

refers to an entire group or subgroup within a particular location. Ilara-Mokin and its environs are contextualised as “community” within the context of this study. In an ecological sense, Luloff and Krannieh (2002) see community as the structural relationship that enables a localised population to meet its day day-to-day requirements. The authors further define community development from the system theory perspective as a combination of interrelated social units and systems that performs major social functions. Kaufman (1959) and Wilkson (1991) advance the argument that social interactions remain the overarching feature of any community. Marrita-Canta and Brennan (2012) define community as a “locality made up of people residing in a geographical area; the resources such people require to subsist and progress, and the process in which the individual engages to distribute and exchange such resources to fulfill needs and wants.”

SID (2021) defines development as a process that enables growth, positive change, progress, including the expression of physical, environmental, social, and demographic components of the community to improve the quality of living of the population. Development now encompasses sustainability. Braimah (2019) explains that development as a concept has shifted to sustainable development which is defined as the development that meets the needs of the contemporary population without compromising or conceding those of future generations to meet their developmental needs.

Conceptualising community development, Marrita-Canta and Brennan (2012) define it as:

a process that entails organization, felicitation, and actions that allow people to establish ways to create the community they want to live in. It is also a process that provides vision, planning, direction, and coordinated action towards desired goals associated with the promotion of efforts aimed at improving the conditions in which local resources operate. Consequently, community developers harness local economic, human and physical resources to secure daily requirements and respond to changing needs and conditions.

Community engagement on the other hand generally refers to the partnerships that exist between the Universities and other institutions of higher learning and their host communities.

Onwuebele (2018), sees community engagements as initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the institution in the area of teaching, research, and community service are deployed to address issues that are relevant to the community. Onwuebele (2018) further identifies three models of community engagement: these are the silo model, the intersection model, and the infusion model. The silo model recognises and emphasises the three-prong role of teaching, research, and community service as purely voluntary activities and roles for

academics with little or no motivation for them to engage in community service. The intersection model also recognises the roles of teaching, research, and community service but acknowledges overlaps and intercession in the three roles. This model sees community engagement as a primary responsibility of the university. The infusion model conceives the university as playing two major roles: teaching and learning, with community engagement integrated into the teaching and learning processes. The infusion model is a symbiotic model in which the university learns and benefits from community engagement and the community benefits from the teaching and learning processes (HEQCT/JET, 2007).

### **Ilara-Mokin: A Historical and Cultural Odessey**

The history of Ilara-Mokin is closely tied with the history of the Yoruba people who for a certain reason (political, expansionistic, and adventurist) migrated from Ife at a point in the time and settled in different locations, including the people of Ilara-Mokin, who eventually settled at their present site.

According to oral history, the first Alara, which is the King of Ilara-Mokin was Obalufon Modulua Olutipin, who is said to be the same person as Obalufon Ogbogbodirin or Obalufon Alayemore, rulers of Ife between the 14th and 16th centuries who established many different settlements before returning to Ile-Ife to rule. They were direct descendants of the semi-legendary Yoruba founder, Oduduwa. Among those settlements was what is now known as the town of Ilara-Mokin. He led his family and supporters from Ile-Ife to a site in the modern Ekiti region and placed his son Ayajo on the throne before returning to Ile-Ife. The people, known as the Ara people (a Yoruba word that means relative, or family), migrated for several centuries in the region until they arrived at a permanent location for safety and resources in the mid-1800s as civil wars plagued Yorubaland, which is their present location.

The name Ilara-Mokin is derived from the contraction of the phrase, “*Ilé ará mọ ọkín*” (in the native Ekiti dialect, “*Ulé ará ará mọ ọ ọ ọkín*), meaning “The House of Ará knows the ọkín bird. The word ọkín, is presently attributed to the peacock. Originally, it was referred to as a pure white bird known for its beautiful feathers and was said to represent royalty and prestige. It is called “*Ọba Eṣẹ*” “King of the Birds.” The phrase was later translated to “*Ìlára-Mọkín*,” or “*Ùlára-Mọkín*.” As a town in the Ondo region, it was significantly influenced by the Akure and the Benin Kingdoms. During the Kiriji War that was fought from July 1877 to March 1893, Ilara served as the headquarters for the spy unit of the Ekiti-Parapo army.

The town consists of five historical sections, brought about by the migration of different groups to the present location. Each of the groups is led by one or a

series of Chiefs. The first one, Okè-Òde, also known as Luare, consists mainly of migrants from surrounding towns of Àkùré, Ìgbàrá-Okè, and Ìkọta. The second and third in the hierarchy of chiefs of the town, the Ọbaálá, and Lísà, are the leaders of this section. Other Chiefs from this section include the Aráloyìn, Oşíndílé, and Seleşọ.

The second section, Odò-Ùgbẹn is the oldest section of the town and includes members of the royal family. Consequently, the Alára, or king of the town is crowned from this unit. The leading Chief of the section is the Ọşogbọn. Others are the Ùró (Okè-Ìró), which is led by Chief Sáo, the Awo (or Ao), led by Chief Aláwo or Aláo, and the Ùdọfin (Ọdọfin) is led by Chief Ọdọfin. Ilara-Mokin is traditionally governed by the Alara of Ilara-Mokin. Presently, Oba Abiodun Aderemi Adefehinti, Agbekorun II, has been on the throne since July 17, 1998, when he succeeded Alara, Oba Solomon Ojopagogo Afinbiokin, Adeyeye II. The Alara is assisted in the traditional administration of the town by a cabinet of Chiefs.

The people of Ilara-Mokin celebrate many festivals and holidays. The first is Mokin Day, which takes place in November of every year. Next is “Odun Ijesu”, which translates as Holiday of Eating Yams, to celebrate a successful harvest. This is celebrated in the first week of September. It is referred to as “Ìjẹsu” because the major crop grown and sold in the community are yams (uşu), which also, is the staple food of the people. During the period of “Ijesu”, many rituals are performed, including Obèrèmóyè, a whipping contest, and apoporo, which entails drumming, and dancing at night.

The “Àjàlémògún” festival is celebrated in honor of the deity Àjàlémògún, the main orisa (deity) of Ilara-Mokin which according to legend, has played a central role in the history of the town. The festival, which is now obsolete, consisted of carrying a large figurine representing the deity from the forest to the market at the center of the town. Many other rituals, which are presently frowned at were said to be done to appease the deity that brought peace, joy, and prosperity to the land. Traditional Yoruba rites are presently practiced by some indigenes of Ilara including the celebration of the Ọgún festival in September, and another festival devoted to Osun in July yearly.

### Theoretical Framework

This chapter is anchored on the theoretical underpinnings of structural-functionalism, and the theory of development using the modernising, structural change, and the human factor models. Structural functionalism theory is closely associated with the works of Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parson (Fisher, 2010). Structural-functionalism views society as an organic structure with many interrelated parts performing simultaneous functions for its stability. Structural functionalism

theory views society through the lens of the functions performed by the structures.

According to Susser (1992), functionalists view political and social units from the perspective of an organism with many parts performing different roles. Functionalists drew parallels between the structures and functions of an organism. In their view according to Susser (1992), structures are equated to anatomy and functions to the physiology of the organism. This resonates with Obi (2008) who situated the structural-functional theory within the ambit of society being a complex system with many separate but integrated parts functioning towards equilibrium.

The structural functionalism theory aptly situates the transformational role of Elizade University in the social and economic space of Ilara-Mokin within the socially defined functions and roles that the university has so far played in the social and economic development of the community. The Elizade University as a structural whole and its economic and social function which have contributed to the transformational progression of Ilara-Mokin from its rural to urban status can be graphically plotted within the structural-functionalism theory.

The modernisation of Ilara-Mokin can aptly be situated within the theory of development with emphasis on the modernising, structural change, and the human factor models. Traceable to the ideas of Marx Weber and developed by Talcott Parson, the modernising model posits a progressive transition from a traditional society to a modern one by the adoption of modern practices. (Wolfgang 2003). The theory posits that traditional societies or countries can be brought to development like the more developed countries and societies by arguing that this can only be attained if they adopt more modern practices. (Gavrovs *et al*, 2015). The modernising theory also succinctly situates the modernising progression of Ilara-Mokin from its rural state to a more modern society with all the trappings of modernity.

Cocci (2019) explains that the structural change model of development focuses generally, on the mechanism that leads to the economic transformation of a nation or society from its traditional agricultural state to an industrial or service system. This approach according to Cocci (2019) is based on the neo-classical price and resource allocation theories. He states that the structural change model considers a process of self-sustaining growth and employment expansion that will eventually result in the structural change of the society. Ilara-Mokin for the past decade has experienced notable and tremendous structural changes brought about the presence of the University which can be rightly situated within the structural change model of development.

The human factor model or approach of development postulates that the development of any society is driven by the activities of the persons in the society. Olugbenga (2011), citing Chivaura and Mararike (1998) argues that no organisation or society can sustain its development drive without patriotic persons who are



reliable, committed, and disciplined. The human factor model of development, therefore, seeks to develop and also encourage persons who can blend their social values and skills for the development of their society. Olugbenga (2011) concludes that for a society to develop, its people must be responsible, committed, dedicated, loyal, and possess the quality of integrity in their pursuit of the developmental goals of the community. The transformation or metamorphosis of Ilara-Mokin was brought about largely by the commitment, dedication, loyalty, and integrity of the founder of Elizade University, Chief Michael Ade.Ojo. He remained the human factor that has brought about, the transformational development of the Ilara-mokin community. This resonates aptly with the human factor model of development.

Sharma (2015) had explained that universities in their located communities can assist in providing necessary and new knowledge, skills needed to meet the challenges of sustainable development in the communities. Universities in their localities, he further explained may assist in the building of new institutions of civil society, development of cultural and social values, and also contribute in socialising the people of the local community.

### **Town and Gown: The Nexus of Reciprocity and the Elizade University Perspective**

The vital component of development according to Jimoh (2018) can be credited to several factors including the human, physical, and methods of governance. He argues that the values of resources become meaningful only when they are carefully harnessed and deployed for the benefit of the human community. The administration and appropriate utilisation of resources is better utilised by the elitist class (Gown) but with the consequences on the larger community (Town). Therefore, the concept of town and gown has a relationship that is reciprocal within the purview of development and wellbeing of the people. Gown in this sense represents the ivory tower, the university, peopled by academics and non-academics whose developmental efforts can change the lives and aspirations of the community. On the other hand, the larger community (Town) provides the security and the enabling environment for Gown to thrive.

Orubu (2018) sees Town and Gown as the description of the relationship that exists between a university and the people who live in the community in which the university is located. He elaborated that 'Town and Gown' represent two dissimilar communities of a University City or town with Town referring to the non-academic population while the Gown represents the academic community. Orubu (2018) also noted that a complementary relationship also exists between the university and its host communities. He noted that the existence of a university in a semi-

urban setting is the backbone of the economy of the host community in as much as the university largely depends on the peace and security of the host community to effectively discharge its mandate of community service, teaching, and research.

There is the need for Town and Gown to cooperate to enthrone a regime of sustainable development. It is in this regard that deliberate effort has been made to foster a better and harmonious relationship between Town and Gown in the Ilara-Mokin community. There is no gainsaying the fact that the existence of Elizade University in Ilara-Mokin, has had a tremendous impact on the transformation of the town. Ilara-Mokin is now on the world map because of the presence of the University. Before the existence of Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin was almost unknown outside its immediate locale. The university has impacted the socio-economic life of the community. Many, who hitherto would not have had any business coming to Ilara-Mokin, now work and live in the town. The students and their parents from all walks of life have, in no small measure contributed, to the economic growth of the community as more retail outlets are continuously established daily as a consequence of a ready market. The contemporary cosmopolitan nature of the community has led to the siting of commercial banks in the town.

In the area of education, more awareness has been created amongst the people of Ilara-Mokin on the need for their children to have a university education. These parents now appreciate university education because of the existence of Elizade University in the community. Similarly, arising from the fact that many people now work and live in Ilara-Mokin because of the existence of the University, the population of the community has grown tremendously. Arising from the need to protect the University from any form of attack, the community has witnessed improved security within the past decade.

As part of the University's engagement with the community, a mobile application for the management of sewage application, developed by scholars of the Department of Biological Sciences, led by Dr. Osuolale Olayin, has been introduced to the local community of Ilara-Mokin and its environs. This mobile application is presently operational for the management of sewage evacuation in Imo State at the instance of the Imo state government.

The University has equally been involved in community engagement by donating books and other educational materials to schools in Ilara-Mokin as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

### **Contextualising the Transformational Intervention of Elizade University on Ilara-Mokin**

Elizade University, born out of a passion for societal development has largely met

the expectation of the Visitor and founder of the university and the people of Ilara-Mokin. The establishment of this university in the hitherto rural community of Ilara-Mokin has led to the tremendous transformation of the community into an urban town within a decade. The transformational impact of the university on Ilara-Mokin can eminently be plotted within the graphical landscape of its social and economic development.

Extant records in the university reveal that a total of 160 indigenes of Ilara-Mokin are gainfully employed in the university outside several contracts executed by artisans who are indigenes of the community. With a staff strength of 320, excluding adjunct academic staff, 250 staff members live in the community while 70 are residents on campus. The impact of the daily economic activities of the staff of the university has led to an upsurge in the establishment of supermarkets and shopping malls in the Ilara-Mokin. The nursery and primary education needs of children of Elizade university staff and other economically empowered indigenes of the community, with the attendant increase in pupils' enrolment, have led to the establishment of 4 nursery and primary schools in the town.

The Smoking-Hill golf resort, one of the best in Africa, built by the founder and visitor to the university has accentuated the beauty of the town in addition to enhancing the economic activities in the community. The influx of golfers from other parts of Nigeria to Ilara-Mokin has to a large extent added impetus to the hospitality business in the town.

Within the last decade, 14.5 km of township roads, with pavements and drains have been constructed by the founder and Visitor to the university to ease vehicular and pedestrian movements of residents, students, parents, and visitors to the university. The presence of very good roads in the community has led to an annual car racing event between the sports unit of the university and the Ministry of Works of the Ondo State government with other private organisations. Also, a collapsed bridge at Wahab Adegbenro Street at the heart of the town was recently constructed at a total cost of 7.9 million Naira by the Founder and Visitor to the university, Chief Michael Ade.Ojo. The town is presently illuminated at night with the provision of solar street lights on major roads in the town to aid nightlife economic activities and security. The sum of 8 million Naira was spent on the provision of these solar-powered street lights. To ensure steady power supply to the community, a dedicated 33KVA power line spanning 22 km from Akure to Ilara-Mokin, for 38 million was also solely financed by the Visitor and founder to the university, Chief (Dr.) Michael Ade.Ojo. This has led to an improved public power supply to the entire community.

The presence of Elizade University has also led to improvement in the human capacity development in the community, what with a scholarship scheme put in place by the founder and visitor to the university. Seven indigenes who were first

set beneficiaries of the scholarship scheme are now a full-time staff of the University. In 2019, the 400 levels students of the Economics Department of the University donated sets of books to the library of the Apostolic High School, Ilara-Mokin, as a contribution to meeting one of the objectives of the sustainable development goals. The students while donating, emphasised that Elizade University is replete with books but regretted that people seldom read. They added that knowledge and information sharing would be enhanced if people can dedicate more time to reading. Their donation according to the students is geared toward improving the human capacity development of the students of the Apostolic High School, Ilara-Mokin.

The ambiance and facilities of the university have made it a preferred destination for the hosting of seminars, conferences, and workshops for several organisations, non-governmental organisations, and government departments. As a consequence of the first-class facilities of the university, it became the venue of choice for the hosting of 2021 BEMORE BOOTCAMP, the pet project of the first lady of Ondo state, Arabirin Betty Anyaku-Akeredolu. The top-notch equipment at the faculty of engineering workshop facilitated the training of the many young girls drawn from various schools in Ondo state. The young girls were exposed to new skills and innovation in engineering and technology in the three weeks they were camped in the cozy and comfortable environment of the university. The university also played host to the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) annual conference from 26<sup>th</sup> October to 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The Alara of Ilara-Mokin, in November 2021, led the Yoruba Obas and chiefs to the beautiful university campus for sightseeing after their meeting in the serene town of Ilara-Mokin.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted the focus group discussion, a qualitative method of data gathering to generate the primary data, weaved around the two objectives of the study: To examine the extent, the presence of Elizade University has impacted the socio-economic development of Ilara-Mokin in the past ten years and to also examine the extent; the presence of Elizade University has affected the lives of residents of Ilara-Mokin.

Eight discussants, who are indigenes and have lived in Ilara-Mokin for the past 15 years were selected for the discussion. The focus group discussions were analysed inductively and deductively.

### **Data Analysis/Findings**

#### **Research Question 1**

Has the establishment of the University impacted the socio-economic transformation of Ilara-Mokin?

Categories	Themes
Infrastructural Impact	Established the massive construction of roads with side drains, improved electricity supply, and provision of street lights.
Promotion of place	Fame, Labelling, Facility
Economic impact	Increase in commercial activities, like boost in trading activities, improved hospitality business.
Quality of residence	Better residential houses upgraded for rental purposes.
Improved quality of life	Better standard of living occasioned by gainful employment of many indigenes by the university and improved business activities in the town.
Educational Impact.	Presence of several private nurseries and primary schools. The need for the establishment of a University staff secondary school was highlighted.
Mechanism of development	Relocation of people to the town.

*Source:* FGD, 2021.

Discussants in the focus group established that the presence of the university has led to massive infrastructural development in the town. This is evidenced by the massive road construction with side drains that have taken place in the town in addition to the provision of improved electricity

A discussant quipped that:

A few years ago, the founder of the Elizade University, Chief (Dr.) Michael Ade.Ojo tarred several roads in the town with street lights and drains, thereby giving the town more facelift. The roads were tarred to provide visitors, students, and parents good roads to navigate in the town while going to the university or engaging in other economic or social activities.

The discussion further reveals that the university has positively impacted the economic and education status of the town. A discussant revealed “The Elizade University has employed many Ilara-Mokin indigenes including myself. Nobody will earn money from the university and say he is not benefitting.”

The discussion further revealed that the quality of residences in the town has improved with residential houses upgraded to attract rents. The presence of private nurseries and primary schools, complementing existing primary schools have accounted for improved educational standards in the community. Discussants noted the absence of university staff secondary school in the community. In their opinion,

the presence of a University staff secondary school with the academic standard of Elizade University will be desirable. Furthermore, the town presently has a propensity for further expansion and development as a consequence of more persons relocating to the town.

### Research Question 2

Has the presence of Elizade University affected the lives of the residents of Ilara-Mokin?

Categories	Themes
Business Growth	Improved the growth of personal business
Occupational fulfillment.	Advancement in the careers of indigenes
Security	A sense of personal safety with the presence of a police station and police patrols.
Social interaction	Improvement in quality of the social relationship
Self-esteem	Better confidence level occasioned by improvement in personal resources
Family Responsibility	Improved family cohesion and prestige

*Source:* FGD. 2021.

Discussants revealed that the presence of the Elizade University has had positive effects on their personal lives. Traders and others business persons are happy about the noticeable improvements in their business. One of the discussants said:

The Elizade university presence has improved my market. My small store has almost grown to be a supermarket because of more sales. Those provisions that we do not use to sell in this town are now sold. For example, Quaker oats, cornflakes, and, many others are now sold. I am personally making more profit now from my business. Both workers and students of the university buy things from me.

Discussants also revealed that the career advancements of some indigenes that are employed by the University have been enhanced. According to a discussant, being employed at Elizade University has advanced her career as a university worker. The presence of the University has impacted the social life of the people. A discussant posits that the quality of her social life in the community has improved since the establishment of the University.

Discussants were unanimous that the University's presence has impacted positively on their personal and family resources. This has gone a long to improving

their family cohesion and prestige. A widow discussant explained:

I was able to carry out a befitting burial ceremony for my mother when she died few a years ago, the same thing also for my father who died last year, the money I used for the burial ceremonies were gotten from the University. My nakedness was covered by the school lest I walk naked and become ashamed during the ceremonies. Apart from that, I became the breadwinner for my family because of the loss of my husband. I was able to sponsor all my children in school

The study found out that the presence of Elizade University has positively transformed the rural community of Ilara-Mokin into an urban town. The study found out from both inductive and deductive evidence, the presence of structural and other social amenities befitting any modern town, with the propensity to accentuate development. What with a good road network, largely stable electricity, and solar power street lights that support nightlife? The study also found out that the community enjoys relatively good security of lives and property with the presence of a full-fledged police station and regular police patrols. The study further revealed that the presence of the University has impacted positively on the personal lives of residents of the community as a result of improved economic activities. The study found out that the residents of the community are desirous of a University staff secondary school to complement existing secondary schools in the community.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The chapter has examined the extent to which the existence of Elizade University has impacted the socio-economic transformation of Ilara-Mokin in the past ten years. The study was situated within the theoretical paradigm of structural functionalism and development and driven by the nexus of town and gown relationships. The study further contextualised the transformational roles of the presence of Elizade University in the Ilara-Mokin community and identified several pieces of socio-economic evidence of development through the efforts of the Visitor and founder of the University, Chief (Dr.) Michael Ade.Ojo which have positively impacted the socio-economic fabrics of the Ilara-mokin community. From triangulated evidence, the study also found out that the personal well-being of residents of Ilara-Mokin has greatly improved as a consequence of the presence of the Elizade University. However, the absence of a University staff school is a gap deserving the attention of the University management. The paper, therefore, recommends that the management of Elizade University take steps to establish an Elizade University Staff Secondary School to further enhance the educational needs of the community.

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*Elizade University @10: Navigating a Complex Path in the Making of a World-Class University* is an initiative designed to document the strides of Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin, Nigeria, during the first decade of its founding, among other reasons. The book consists of 19 chapters divided into three parts, which include essays that focus on salient issues pertaining to tertiary education in Nigeria, and the various efforts made by Elizade University in the overall pursuit of its world-class-university vision. Contributors to this book include renowned and accomplished academics, astute university administrators and A-Class professionals, who were carefully selected from within and outside Elizade University. The book also contains lectures by eminent Nigerians, such as Professor Abubakar Rasheed, Professor Wole Soyinka and Professor Peter Okebukola, which they delivered during the University's Convocation Ceremonies.

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